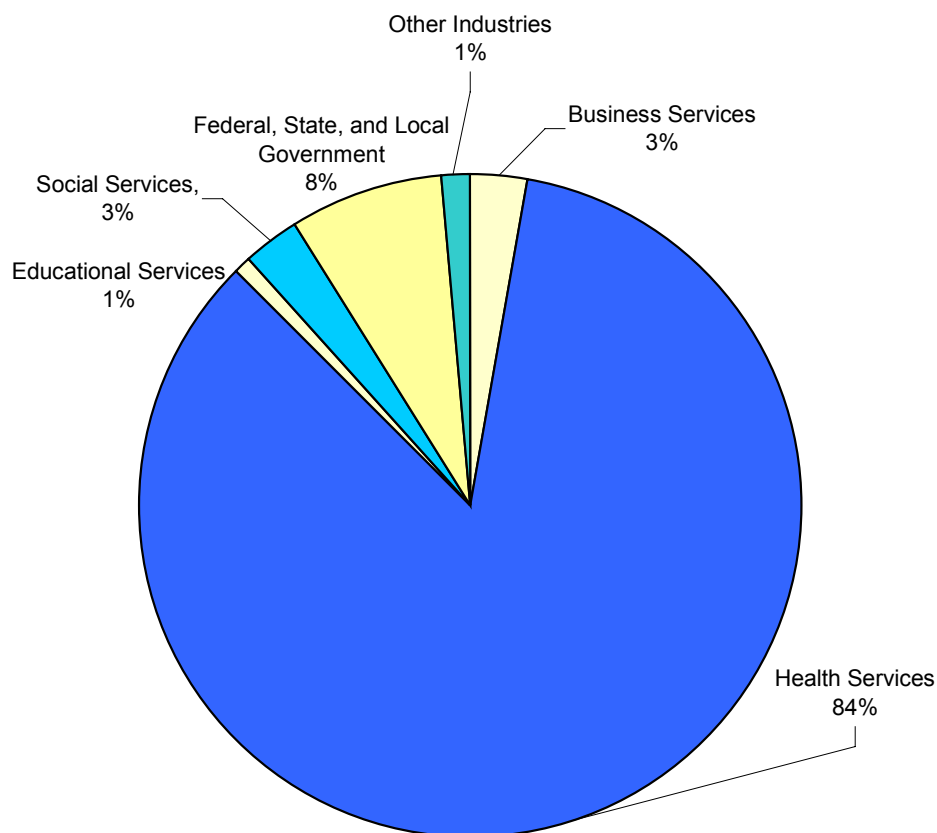


Job Description

Licensed practical nurses (LPNs) care for the sick, injured, convalescent, and disabled under the direction of physicians and registered nurses. Most LPNs provide basic bedside care. They take vital signs such as temperature, blood pressure, pulse, and respiration. They also treat bedsores, prepare and give injections and enemas, apply dressings, give alcohol rubs and massages, apply ice packs and hot water bottles, and monitor catheters. LPNs observe patients and report adverse reactions to medications or treatments. They collect samples for testing, perform routine laboratory tests, feed patients, and record food and fluid intake and output. They help patients with bathing, dressing, and personal hygiene, keep them comfortable, and care for their emotional needs. In Missouri, with additional training and certification, they may administer prescribed medicines or start intravenous fluids. Some LPNs help deliver, care for, and feed infants.

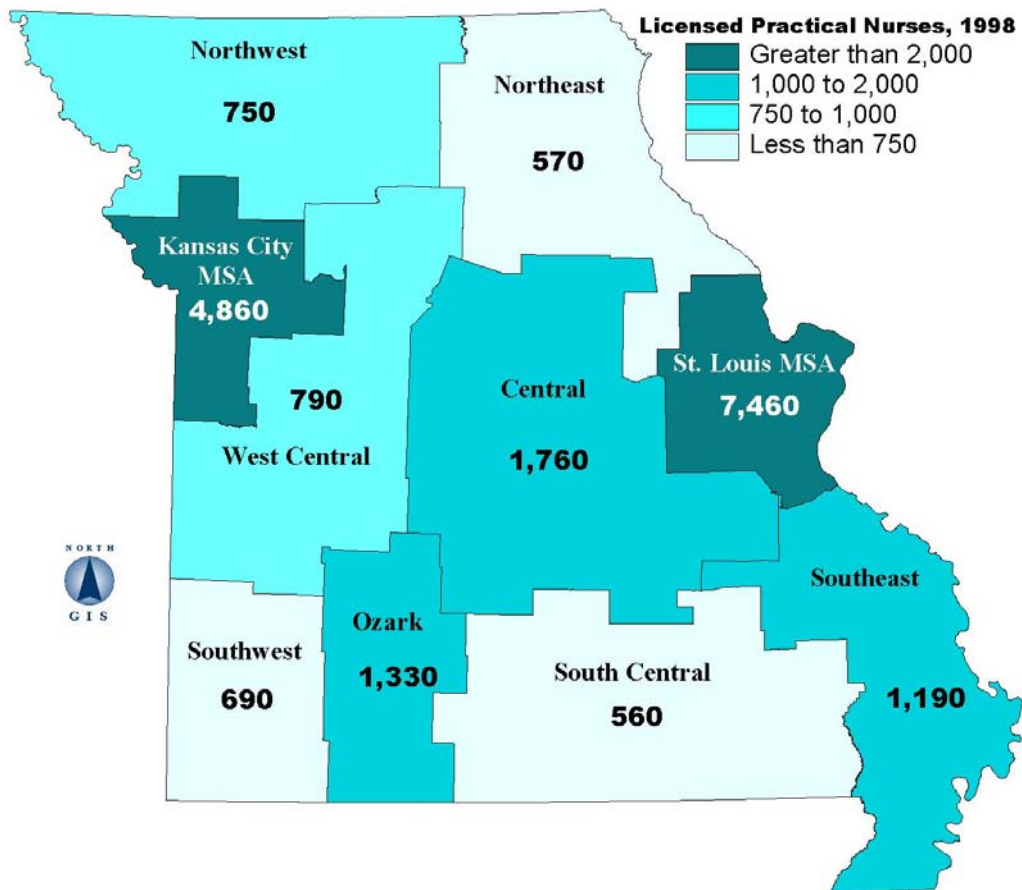
Employment by Industry



Employment Trends

| Region | Employment | | Projected Growth | Percent Change | Average Annual Openings |
|----------------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|-------------------------|
| | 1998 | 2008 | | | |
| United States | 692,000 | 828,000 | 136,000 | 19.7% | 284,000 |
| Missouri | 16,110 | 17,630 | 1,520 | 9.4% | 500 |
| Northwest Region | 750 | 810 | 60 | 8% | 22 |
| Northeast Region | 570 | 610 | 40 | 7.0% | 16 |
| Kansas City MSA | 4,860 | 5,070 | 210 | 4.3% | 124 |
| West Central Region | 790 | 790 | 0 | 0% | 17 |
| Central Region | 1,760 | 1,900 | 140 | 8.0% | 52 |
| St. Louis MSA | 7,460 | 8,230 | 770 | 10.3% | 237 |
| Southwest Region | 690 | 810 | 120 | 17.4% | 27 |
| Ozark Region | 1,330 | 1,580 | 250 | 18.8% | 53 |
| South Central Region | 560 | 610 | 50 | 8.9% | 17 |
| Southeast Region | 1,190 | 1,250 | 60 | 5.0% | 32 |

Source: Missouri Economic Research & Information Center, Projections Unit



Wage Information

| Region | Average Hourly Wage | Average Annual Wage |
|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| United States | \$14.15 | \$29,432 |
| Missouri | \$13.05 | \$27,144 |
| Northwest Region | \$11.20 | \$23,296 |
| Northeast Region | \$10.92 | \$22,714 |
| Kansas City MSA | \$13.75 | \$28,600 |
| West Central Region | \$11.84 | \$24,627 |
| Central Region | \$11.95 | \$24,856 |
| St. Louis MSA | \$15.14 | \$31,491 |
| Southwest Region | \$11.92 | \$24,794 |
| Ozark Region | \$11.90 | \$24,752 |
| South Central Region | \$10.62 | \$22,090 |
| Southeast Region | \$10.77 | \$22,402 |

The average annual salary for Licensed Practical Nurses in Missouri is \$27,144 per year, somewhat less than the national average. The occupation requires 12 months education and passage of the licensing exam.

Source: Missouri Economic Research & Information Center, Occupational Employment Statistics Unit

Typical Tasks

- Administers medication, orally or by injection, and notes information on patients' charts.
- Provides medical treatment and personal care to patients in private home settings.
- Takes and records patients' vital signs.
- Dresses wounds, gives enemas, douches, alcohol rubs, and massages.
- Applies compresses, ice bags, and hot water bottles.
- Observes patients and reports adverse reactions to treatment to personnel in charge.
- Bathes, dresses, and assists patients in walking and turning.
- Assembles and uses such equipment as catheters, tracheotomy tubes, and oxygen suppliers.

- Collects samples from patients for testing and performs routine laboratory tests on samples.
- Sterilizes equipment and supplies, using germicides, sterilizer, or autoclave.
- Records food and fluid intake and output.

Skills Needed

- Active Listening
- Service Orientation
- Information Gathering
- Reading Comprehension
- Problem Identification
- Speaking
- Critical Thinking
- Monitoring
- Social Perceptiveness
- Judgment and Decision-Making

Preparation and Licensing Requirements

Necessary Education

- Twelve month program
- Available at vocational schools or community colleges

Licensing

This occupation requires a license in Missouri. The Missouri State Board of Nursing gives the licensing exam to graduates of accredited nursing programs. A passing grade is required for licensure.

Job Outlook

- Employment is expected to grow about as fast as the average for all occupations.
- The majority of job openings will come from the need to replace retiring nurses.
- Nursing homes will offer the most new jobs for LPNs as the number of aged persons in need of long-term care rises.

There will be high demand for Licensed Practical Nurses in home healthcare services. Many sophisticated procedures, which once were performed only in hospitals, are being performed in physicians' offices and clinics, including ambulatory surgicenters and emergency medical centers. This is due largely to advances in technology. As healthcare expands outside the traditional hospital setting, employment of LPNs is projected to grow much faster than average in these places while the number of hospital jobs for LPNs will decline.

For More Information

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*Other Sources: United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, Missouri CHOICES, O*Net.*